



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

## FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sustainable Fisheries Division  
727-824-5305, FAX 727-824-5308

April 27, 2016  
FB16-028

## NOAA Announces New Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Annual Catch Limits, Annual Catch Targets, and the 2016 Red Snapper Recreational Seasons *Small Entity Compliance Guide*

NOAA Fisheries approved Amendment 28 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Amendment 28) submitted by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). A final rule implementing these measures will publish in the *Federal Register* on April 28, 2016, with an effective date of May 31, 2016. As a result of this rule, NOAA provides notification of the 2016 private angling and federal for-hire red snapper fishing seasons.

The Council approved Amendment 28 to reallocate the red snapper harvest consistent with the 2014 red snapper update population assessment to ensure the allowable catch and recovery benefits from a rebuilding population are fairly and equitably allocated between commercial and recreational fishermen. The amendment reallocates the red snapper stock annual catch limit between the commercial and recreational sectors from 51:49 percent to 48.5:51.5 percent, respectively.

### Management Measures

The final rule revises the 2016 and 2017:

- Commercial quotas,
- Recreational quotas and annual catch targets,
- Sub-quotas and annual catch targets for the private angling and federally permitted for-hire components within the recreational sector.

The 2016 and 2017 quotas and annual catch targets in millions of pounds whole weight are shown below.

Sector or component	Annual catch limit		Annual catch target	
	2016	2017	2016	2017
Commercial	6.768	6.664	---	---
Recreational	7.192	7.076	5.754	5.661
Federally permitted for-hire	3.042	2.993	2.434	2.395
Private angling	4.150	4.083	3.320	3.266

### Recreational Fishing Seasons

The federal recreational seasons for the components are based on their respective annual catch targets, which are less than their respective annual catch limits. Based on the annual catch targets and accounting for the red snapper harvest in state waters outside the federal season, the federal season for the private angling component will be 9 days and the federal season for the federally permitted for-hire component will be 46 days.

The 2016 federal red snapper recreational season will open for the private angling and federally permitted for-hire components on June 1, 2016, at 12:01 a.m., local time. Closing dates are:

- **Private Anglers: June 10, 2016, at 12:01 a.m., local time.**
- **Federally Permitted For-Hire Vessels: July 17, 2016, at 12:01 a.m., local time.**

The federal-water red snapper bag limit is 2 fish per person per day with a 16-inch minimum total length size limit.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

Electronic copies of the amendment, final rule, and season notification may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>. For more information on Amendment 28 and how the 2016 recreational season lengths were calculated, visit [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/reef\\_fish/2013/am28/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2013/am28/index.html).

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.